India

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NOTES AND NEWS.

Lord Curzon's most recent telegram regarding the famine is dated November 2, and is as follows:—

"Rain confined to Burma and Madras, and prospects unaltered generally.

"The north-east monsoon has set in on the east coast (south), but with current below the average strength.

"The outlook is gloomy in South Punjab, parts of Central India and Rajputana, and in the latter area distribution of relief has been commenced.

"Prices, however, remain low or moderate. They have fallen substantially in Bombay, the Deccan, and even in Gujarat, where the kharif out-turn is very short, and rabi sowing operations have been retarded owing to want of rain.

"Elsewhere, on the whole, conditions are favourable, except in the case of limited areas of the North-Western Provinces and Central Provinces.

"Numbers in receipt of relief:—Bombay, 131,000; Bombay Native States, 21,000; Baroda, 27,000; Hyderabad, relief discontinued; Mysore, 3,000; total, 182,000."

This is no improvement upon last week's news, and October—the month in which the Famine Commission is believed to have expected the famine to end—is now over. The "Manchester Guardian," commenting on this telegram, remarks that "India is again on the verge of a serious famine, the extent of which will be determined by the weather of the next few weeks." But is not this an under-statement? Is it not more accurate to say that India is now well in the third year of serious famine, which appears to have become chronic? The "Morning Leader" asks when the Lord Mayor intends to re-open the Mansion House Fund. We have more than once asked the same question, and we hereby repeat it.

The Viceregal telegram of October 26 informed the Secretary of State that the numbers on relief were "decreasing rapidly," and the latest telegram shows a decline from 212,000 to 182,000. The rain of the week, however, has been "confined to Burma and Madras"; and, though the north-east monsoon has set in on the south of the East coast, yet the current is "below the average strength." Last week we were warned that "the outturn of autumn crops will be very short in the Punjab, Rajputana, parts of Central India, and Gujerat"; and this week it is admitted that the "outlook is gloomy in South Punjab, parts of Central India, and Rajputana," and even that in Rajputana "distribution of relief has been commenced." Oddly enough, at the same time, "prices remain low, or moderate," while they have "fallen substantially in Bombay Deccan, and even in Gujerat." "Elsewhere, on the whole, conditions are favourable, except in the case of limited areas of North-Western Provinces and Central Provinces." The outlook of Western India, with its very short autumn crops, is gloomy indeed, and the decline of the numbers on relief seems only too likely to be but a temporary respite. The signs point ominously to another bout of famine. Is it not about time, on all imaginable grounds, to set about active measures directed explicitly to prevention?

Once more we are reminded that the horrors of famine are not physical only, and that moral deterioration is among its most permanent effects. The "Friend of India" calls the last Report on the Working of the Thagi and Dakaiti Department "an appalling document." In the Native States of Rajputana the reported cases of gang robbery rose from 75 to 1,084, while in Central India they increased from 200 to 1,189. Two years ago the State of Dungarpur was free from such crimes, and in fact the greater number of such offences were solely the product of hunger—robberies of grain, not by professional Dacoits, but by starving Bhils. As the year went on many of these Bhils formed organised bands under recognised leaders, and, as our contemporary puts it, "there is only too much reason to apprehend that many an offender who thus first assumed the rôle of robber only under the pressure of necessity will be tempted hereafter to continue it from choice."

At the opening of the Jehlam Canal at Rasul (October 29), Sir Mackworth Young, the Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab, took occasion to review the progress of irrigation in the Punjab. In 1864, he pointed out, 625,000 acres were under canal irrigation, yielding a net profit of 12 lakhs. In 1900 the figures had grown to 6,000,000 acres, and 108 lakhs net profit.

The value of the crops had risen in the same period from 162 to 1,587 lakhs. Thus produce valued at 9⅓ millions sterling had been added to the annual wealth of the country owing to the operations of the Punjab Irrigation Department during the past thirty-six years.

The possibility of a colonisation scheme, rendered probable by the experience of the Sidhnai Canal (1886), was conclusively established by the Chenab scheme.

In the Rechna Doab, an unproductive tract comprising 4,420 square miles, where a race of nomads found a scanty pasturage for their cattle, there now exists a Punjab in miniature, with 792,000 sturdy souls gathered from the best cultivators of the province, whose paternal acres have been too narrow for them, and who have accepted their transplantation with the utmost complaisance.

The Jehlam Canal will irrigate 612,000 acres, yielding annual crops worth £1,220,000. It cost 125 lakhs. Well, but why is it that there are not more such useful works to point to? Is the advance stated by Sir Mackworth adequate for a generation of progress?

Mr. R. P. Paranjpye, B.A., is to be cordially congratulated upon his election to a fellowship at St. John's College, Cambridge. This brilliant Indian mathematician, as our readers will remember, was bracketed senior wrangler in 1899, and was placed in Division I of Class I in the second part of the Mathematical Tripos last year. He now receives the high and gratifying distinction of a fellowship of the College of which he was hitherto a scholar.

Sir William Lee Warner's article on the Indian Civil Service in the "Cornhill Magazine" has given rise to a long and important article in the "Pioneer." Sir William it will be remembered divided the history of the Civil Service, as looked at from the Civilian's point of view, into three stages, the age of the writerships, the age of Haileybury, and the age of open competition. The "Pioneer" expresses the wish that so well qualified a writer had given a glance ahead at the Fourth Age of the Civil Service. "It can hardly be doubted that the next age will be the age of the Native of India." So that it would appear that one of the chief articles in the programme of the National Congress is, in the opinion of this great Anglo-Indian journal, inevitable, and that the Con-

gress leaders have had a truer conception of the future than their opponents.

This prophecy on the part of the "Pioneer" is all the more striking because it views this future with obvious dislike. If things are left to take their course the change, our contemporary believes, will be very gradual; but already it is apparent in Bengal where the introduction of Indian officials tends to isolate those of British birth who find themselves in the same station. If this movement increases and spreads, the popularity of the service will wane, an inferior stamp of men will compete at the examinations, and the Indians will eventually become masters of the situation. This is what will happen by the natural play of the forces already in operation. But the "Pioneer" has a terrible vision of what may happen if the House of Commons should again pass a resolution in favour of Simultaneous Examinations. "The gates once opened, the Service would be scoured of the European element before anyone could close them again." Would it not be well to anticipate this foreseen revolution by openly accepting and carefully and gradually introducing such changes as are admitted to be inevitable?

Like Sir William Warner, the "Pioneer" bewails the estrangement between Europeans and Indians, and looks back regretfully to the old days when "British and Indian Nabobs pitted their cocks against each other in battle." Our contemporary admits that "the Civilians of modern days—with individual exceptions—are not successful in their relations with the Natives," though it considers that the officers of the Indian Army have done much better. On the other hand, it believes that there are faults on both sides. "The Native Civil Service of to-day, by the general consent of all who are in a position to know, stands on a very much higher level not only of official efficiency but of character than it did thirty years ago. The officials of the new school have amply shown that they imbibe not only learning but higher things at the Colleges. But they unfortunately do not acquire there any affection for the European." This is a pleasant change from the usual raving of the Anglo-Indian on the foolishness, cowardice, and iniquity of the educated Indian. Perhaps if the "Pioneer" and its readers always spoke in this way there might be more affection, and the two races might come to live on better terms.

The Imperial Anglo-Indian Society in February last presented a memorial to the Bengal Government, in which they set forth the grievances of Eurasians and domiciled Europeans. The reply has now been published, and can hardly be to the taste of the memorialists. Some of the allegations of grievances are said to be of "so vague and impalpable a nature as to defy examination." The claims of the Eurasians to special consideration are set aside. In fact it is not very obscurely hinted that they already receive a greater measure of consideration than they deserve. For instance, their claim that the support given to their schools is insignificant compared with that extended to schools for "Natives of the country" is met by a quotation of the figures, the former having received Rs.8,300,000, in comparison with 99,00,000 spent on the latter. So that in proportion to population the Eurasians were immensely favoured. Even if the whole rural population were excluded, and only those classes of Indians who take an interest in higher education were counted, the Eurasians would still, as tried by the test of numbers, have nothing to complain of; there would even have to be some corresponding subtractions on the Eurasian side.

On one point, indeed, the memorialists have, as it seems to us, good reason to complain of the answer, but here the grievance is one which they share with the rest of their fellow-countrymen. The Government gives as a reason for the practical exclusion of Indians and Eurasians from the Civil Service—or at least for the refusal of simultaneous examinations in England and India—the superiority of English education. But as the "Mahratta" justly observes this is rather a reason for improving education in India. In fact when we consider this grievance we are brought back to the position that the points in which one section or another of the people of India suffer really serious injustice are those in which the injustice is shared by the whole community; and that the only way to obtain a reform is for the whole people to sink their sectional differences and join heartily together in the pursuit of common objects. It is interesting to note that the Madras Eurasian and Anglo-Indian Association has repudiated the Bengal Memorial.

As a result of a fracas between three soldiers and some villagers, several of the latter were convicted of riot and theft, and received sentences ranging from 18 months to 2½ years. Mr. Fry, the Sessions Judge at Nasik has on appeal reduced the sentences to three months' rigorous imprisonment, and set aside the convictions for theft. It appears that one of the soldiers, Woolnough, molested a woman named Chandri, that the soldiers were first attacked in order to rescue her, and that the Judge only upheld the conviction against the villagers because they had assaulted the soldiers after Chandri had made her escape. In the course of his judgment Mr. Fry declared the sentences out of all proportion to the offence committed, and referred to the bitterness with which all Indians resent any indignity offered to a woman of their family. Further, by a recent circular in the Military Department soldiers are prohibited from even speaking to any Native woman whom they may meet. He declared that the villagers acted under great provocation. But while they have suffered imprisonment, it does not appear that any punishment has been inflicted on the soldiers who gave the provocation.

Mr. B. Nagappa, from Mysore, has won a certificate of honour of the first class in the final examination for call to the Bar. This is said to be the third time, since certificates of honour were first granted in 1853, that a Native of India has obtained this honour. Mr. Nagappa will be the first Native of Mysore that has been called to the English Bar. We wish him all success in the practice of his profession.

With reference to the list, which we lately published, of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji's public engagements, the following changes may be noted. The meeting announced for November 13 will be held on November 12 at Edinburgh. On November 13 a meeting will be held at Dunfermline.

The November number of the "Empire Review" displays an Imperial sense in giving a double article on "Our Position on the North-West Frontier of India" the place of honour. The first paper, by General Sir Edwin Collen, is much the more important, though it contains little that is new to students of Indian affairs. General Collen sees nothing particularly unsatisfactory in the outlook in consequence of the death of the Amir. Still the frontier is always with us, always to be protected—as if anybody wanted to assail it!—and so he explains "what measures we have taken for its defence, and what is our military strength on the frontier." It is "somewhat puzzling to those who have not studied the question on the spot," he says, "to understand what the real frontier of India is." This is an old and frequent complaint of ours, that no man knows where the frontier is—except that it is just where officials happen to want it to be. Sir Edwin tells us that "there are actually two frontiers of India, and even a third which may be called the frontier line of British influence," and he briefly traces them. But where is the statutory frontier? Sir Edwin speaks of the Durand boundary as the frontier "of British influence," but it is not so long since Lord George Hamilton complacently spoke of it as simply the frontier.

As for the mountain tribes, says General Collen, "we may expect that in the future, so long as we respect their independence, friendship and not enmity will be the result." We have long preached this doctrine; the difficulty is that the officials will not practise it, except when the treasury is at low ebb. "During the last twenty years the sum of £11,000,000 has been spent on the construction of strategic railways, roads, and defences"—and how much upon

fighting?—and General Collen sums up the results. For instance: "To our northern outpost of Gilgit we have a good road, and a line of communication between that place and Chitral." Well, but who wants to go to Gilgit, or to Chitral either? "The railway has been opened from Nowshera to Dargai at the foot of the Malakand, a position which could now be held against all comers." Well, but who wants to come? The one fortification we require is the very cheap one of respect for the tribesmen's independence. Of course, the frontier must be protected, but there must be reason in the means adopted; and, if Sir Edwin will again look over his article, he will probably be surprised at the evidence he adduces of steady and wide aggression on our neighbours. He denies the alleged existence of a "military party" in India "eager for active service and its rewards, which is ever aiming at advance beyond the frontier and its consequence, and that to this party the increased military preparation and expenditure are due." To whom, then, is it due? Has Sir Edwin not heard of Sir Henry Norman's remark upon "K.C.B.-mania"? And is Sir Henry without experience? The only noteworthy point in the other paper, by Major A. C. Yate, is his opinion that "we may welcome General Kuropatkin's presence at Kushk or elsewhere as opportune in the interests of peace." Mr. Rees continues to twang his Jew's harp, faithfully reproducing the vulgar attacks on Mr. Cotton, whose shoe-strings he is not worthy to unloose.

The "Times" (November 1) prints a rough-and-ready letter from a planter who claims "close on 25 years' experience in Assam." The writer says there is exaggeration on both sides in the Cotton controversy, and makes the following practical suggestion:—

> If Cotton would only abolish the grog-shops, or put a five-mile limit on them, he would not have much to complain of as regards the coolies' wages. They not only spend 75 per cent. of their earnings there, but lose days and days of work and wages by their physical incapability after their weekly debauch. . . . It is my firm belief that half the ills the coolie flesh is heir to may be traced directly to the Government grog-shop. The liquor sold is vile and maddening, whilst the rice liquor they would have to make for themselves if shops were closed is comparatively harmless in its effects.

The writer's criticism can scarcely be said to touch Mr. Cotton's argument, and we do not doubt that Mr. Cotton will be ready to do what he can to control or abolish grog-shops. But the reform touches the Government in a sensitive spot—the Revenue. We do not shock our temperance friends by quoting particulars illustrating the general statement cited above. If half what the writer says be true, there is only too much room for some faithful remonstrance with the Government of India in respect of "the Government grog-shop."

The indigo industry is no doubt in a very bad way. Foreign competition is one cause; another is the failure of the rains to come at the proper time. The slight improvement of last year is swept away in destructive tide. The area of indigo sowings returned last December was 262,175 acres; the estimated area for December this year is 160,897 acres—a decrease of about 39 per cent., and, as compared with the average areas of the preceding five and ten years, a decrease of 50 per cent. in each case. The estimated production of indigo dye this year is estimated at 40 per cent. below last year's estimate, and below the estimated average of the preceding five and ten years. What are the planters doing in the face of this disastrous decline? And what has become of the Government efforts to help them? Strange thing how industries refuse to flourish in India!

It is becoming more and more evident that the exclusive legislation of the Federal Government of Australia will not be carried without a forcing process. A Melbourne telegram in the "Times" (October 29) states that Mr. Philp, the Premier of Queensland, has been there, and that he "hopes that the Federal Government will appoint a commission to enquire into the state of the sugar industry before proceeding with the Kanaka Labour Bill." We have already indicated the necessity of Kanakas for working the sugar industry of Queensland. Mr. Barton, however, we are told, "thinks that the appointment of such a commission is unlikely, and says that the Federal Government is in possession of fuller information than Queensland." Of course, in view of the well-known facts, a Commission could hardly fail to render such a Report as would materially embarrass the Government in its intentions. We shall be interested to see how Queensland takes such a slap in the face as this statement that it knows less about its own affairs than the Federal Government does. What is this special information in the hands of the Government? And how comes it to know what the colony specially concerned does not know? The Federal Government seems to be involving itself somewhat recklessly in internal conflicts whose issue may prove rather disconcerting. But if Kanakas are not excluded, what becomes of the argument against Indians—to say nothing of Asiatics generally?

A second edition of Dr. J. A. Gray's narrative of experiences and observations "At the Court of the Amir" has just been published by Messrs. Macmillan and Co. (price 6s.). It is impossible to follow Dr. Gray without gaining gradually a pretty shrewd idea of Afghan society, and of the difficulties that surround the path of an Amir. The late Amir appears to have produced upon his late surgeon a powerful personal impression. He is always described as a "remarkable" man; his personal influence is "marvellous." To him have been "entirely due" the "considerable strides toward civilisation" made by Afghanistan during the last ten (now sixteen) years; and Dr. Gray shows by detailed enumeration of reforms how much the late Amir "had at heart the desire to advance his people in knowledge and civilisation." Abdur Rahman had a heavy hand, and brought it down with decision, but Dr. Gray, though at first scandalised, soon "perceived that to view the conduct of an Asiatic ruler over a turbulent country from the standpoint of Western nineteenth century civilisation is to commit not only an error but an injustice." "We English in his service, dazzled by the glamour of his strong personality and charmed by the kindly courtesy of his manner, grew to feel an attachment strong and personal to his Highness"; and, in spite of all drawbacks—this is Dr. Gray's last word—"such is the fascination of the Man that, had one none to consider but oneself, the temptation, for his sake, to re-enter the life would be almost irresistible." Dr. Gray speaks of the new Amir, Habibullah, as "now of mature age, decided in character, and much liked by the people on account of his mild and firm rule while Governor of Kabul." A portrait of the late Amir, after a painting by the author, forms an interesting frontispiece.

The final returns of the Bengal Census have now been published. The totals only differ from those first declared by 3,000 or .004 per cent., while in the Census of 1891, the difference between the provisional and final returns was no less than 300,000. In other words, the error was a hundred times as great. In Puri the difference was only 2, and in Backergunge 5 out of 2,291,752 persons. Such accuracy reflects great credit on all engaged, both the officials and the thousands of volunteer enumerators. It is an example of what can be done by enlisting the efforts of the people in a work undertaken by the Government. In Bengal the total population is now 78,492,910, and of these 3,748,544 are in Native States.

Remittances on India for 50 lakhs were on Wednesday offered for tender by the India Council, and applications amounting to Rs.15,88,27,500 were received at 1s. 3d. and 31-32nds and 1s. 4d. The following amounts in bills were allotted, viz.:—Rs.35,81,500 on Calcutta at an average of 1s. 3.974d.; Rs.7,38,500 on Bombay at an average of 1s. 3.971d.; and Rs.6,80,000 on Madras at an average of 1s. 3.969d. Tenders at 1s. 3d. and 31-32nds will receive about 2 per cent. and above in full. Last week remittances for 53 lakhs were sold for £353,509, making the total disposed of from April 1 to Tuesday night Rs.11,86,73,987, producing £7,883,514. Next week the amount to be offered will be increased to 60 lakhs.

THE INDIAN FAMINE UNION'S MEMORIAL.

ELSEWHERE in our present issue will be found a letter from Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. S. S. Thorburn, and Sir M. M. Bhownaggree, the joint honorary secretaries of the Indian Famine Union, enclosing a copy of the Memorial which is shortly to be presented by the Union to the Secretary of State for India. We have much pleasure in giving publicity to these important documents, and we trust that those of our readers whose names are not already to be found in the list of signatories to the Memorial will without delay take "the opportunity of joining in a movement which is strictly non-party, and which seeks in a humble way to fulfil our national duty towards the Indian people." The proceedings of the Famine Union have from time to time since its foundation been chronicled in our columns, and our readers are probably aware of the purport of the Memorial and of the highly influential and representative character of the signatures supporting it. Nevertheless, it may be convenient once more to recapitulate the salient facts. The Union, which was founded last June upon a strictly non-political basis, takes as its starting-point the proved and admitted interest of the British public in the fortunes of their Indian fellow-subjects. The liberal contributions which have been made to the Famine Relief Funds are but one among many signs of that deep and abiding, if not always quite adequately informed, concern. But the members of the Famine Union believe that contributions to relief funds, and even the work of relief itself, do not exhaust the national duty towards famine-stricken India. They feel that "as trustees for India, a heavy responsibility rests upon them to seek out the causes of these recurring calamities and to co-operate with the Administration in promoting means of prevention." Now the first thing needful to this end is a stream of facts, and in order to obtain these facts the Memorial proposes an enquiry of a special kind :—

> Our request is that the Government will be pleased to cause a detailed enquiry to be made into the economic condition of a limited number of selected villages in each of the provinces which have been afflicted by famine. It is suggested that in each province the local administration should select typical villages, and appoint suitable persons, including officials and non-officials, Europeans and Indians, to make a complete enquiry into their condition, ascertaining the exact financial position of each cultivator, with the history and causes of his difficulties.

Stress appears to be laid upon three main points. The Famine Union (1) desires to co-operate with the Government. It is the Government which is asked to institute the enquiry. Next (2) the enquiry is to be a village enquiry—it is to isolate certain typical phenomena and put them, as it were, under a microscope. And (3) the persons that actually conduct the local investigations which, taken together, will constitute the enquiry are to include officials and non-officials, Europeans and Indians. The proposal seems to us equally modest, scientific, and fruitful, and we hope that when the Memorial comes to be presented it will receive not merely the assent but the cordial approval and support of Lord George Hamilton and the Government of India.

Meantime copies of the Memorial have been circulated to the British Press, and, to judge from the articles which have so far come under our notice, the proposal of the Famine Union has met with almost universal support. We print in our present issue a first instalment of these "opinions of the Press," in which journals of all parties are represented, and among which there is hardly a dissentient voice to be found. The "Manchester Guardian," which is the most scholarly journal in the Kingdom, and which, if it happened to be printed in London, would be in name as well as in fact the "leading Liberal organ," describes the prayer of the Memorial as "a modest request which Lord George Hamilton should find it easy to grant," while it regards the movement as "a sign of the profound interest which Englishmen of all parties take in the well-being of our great dependency." The "Daily News," which prints an article no less cordial and well-informed, thinks the proposal "entirely moderate and non-controversial." The "Morning Leader," which appeals to a very numerous constituency, sets forth reasons, which seem to us unanswerable, why no plausible ground for refusing the prayer of the Memorial can be discovered. The "Echo," in a thoroughly friendly notice, observes with truth that "there is abundant scope in all directions for searching enquiry." These are Liberal journals, and "Liberal without adjectives." The "Daily Graphic," which is Unionist, speaks of the Memorial as a "very temperate appeal," and perceives that enquiry "will help to show what measures of reform are feasible." The "Globe," which holds aloft the banner of Toryism pure and undefiled, recognises the "highly influential and representative character" of the signatories. It proceeds, in a somewhat half-hearted manner, to hint at possible objections to enquiry. It would be too costly, we are told. But where is the evidence? Mr. Thorburn's enquiry in the Western Punjab, which preceded and led up to the Punjab Land Alienation Act, extended to 742 villages and lasted six months. Yet, as the Memorialists pertinently remark, it involved an extra expenditure of no more than £300. But the "Globe" evidently does not believe very strongly in this plea of expense. It admits, as it is bound to do, that if the enquiry led to useful results the cost of it would be immaterial. But it questions the utility of the results on two different and not very coherent grounds—that the information which is wanted is already known, and that the outcome of the enquiry would be "conflicting counsels." The obvious answer is, of course, that if the enquiry yielded no new information it could produce no new conflict; while if it might yield new and material information—as it assuredly would—the prospect of "conflicting counsels" affords not a tittle of sound reason why it should be burked. Could any suggestion, indeed, be more obscurantist, more grotesque, or more truly monstrous? In a matter involving the lives of millions of human beings we are, it would seem, exhorted to refrain from ascertaining the truth lest the truth should upset somebody's opinions and policy. But perhaps we are treating the "Globe" too seriously.

Finally, we come to the journal that is understood to put into literary form the opinions of those who are called "Liberal Imperialists" or "Imperialists in brackets." The "Daily Chronicle" has nothing but praise for the Famine Union and the present Memorial, which it declares to be "characterised by sobriety of language and soundness of reasoning." So far, so good. But the writer of the article labours under a monumental misconception, which we may with all speed dispel. He thinks, or says, that the Indian Famine Union is the Indian National Congress re-organised on a more practical basis and with a single definite object in view. Upon what grounds, if any, is this startling statement made? For our part, we cannot claim to speak either for the Congress or for the Union, but we know enough about both to say that each is perfectly distinct from the other. If the "Daily Chronicle" will not take our word for it, it had better ask Sir M. M. Bhownaggree. One of the recreations of that distinguished man is to denounce and repudiate the Indian National Congress and all its works. One of his occupations is to be an honorary secretary of the Indian Famine Union. Upon one point, indeed, the Congress and the Union—in common with all other competent and disinterested observers of Indian affairs—are in agreement. They believe that enquiry into the causes, with a view to the prevention, of famine is urgently necessary. That was the purport of the chief resolution of the Congress at Lahore last December, and it is the purport of the Famine Union's Memorial. But from that solitary fact to argue that the Union is the Congress on a new basis is so ridiculous as to be sublime. One might as well say that the "Daily Chronicle" is the Congress because it supports the Memorial of the Union. But there is no need to labour the point. We can well imagine that some supporters of the Congress might criticize the Union on the ground that it does not go far enough, and we are quite sure that some members of the Union would dissent from the Congress on the ground that it goes too far. But differences of this kind need not prevent co-operation up to a certain point between the well-wishers of one organization and of the other. The programme of the Famine Union, it might be said, represents the high-water mark not of Indian but of Anglo-Indian opinion. And if Indian opinion goes further, it is no worse for that. The wearer of the shoe is more likely than even the most sympathetic and scientific outsider to know where it pinches.

Now that the Memorial has been published it is to be presumed that there will be a large addition to the important signatures which have already been obtained. The

next step, we understand, will be to appoint a deputation which will present the Memorial to the Secretary of State. It is hard to imagine that Lord George Hamilton will take upon himself the responsibility of negativing a proposal so reasonable in itself and so temperately urged by so many sections of the thoughtful public. The question, it will be seen, is not, Why should the proposal be accepted? but, On what possible grounds can the enquiry be declined? It is, as the Memorialists show, thoroughly in accordance with precedent. It would involve little expense. It need not interrupt the work of more than a handful of officials. And, above all, it is urgently necessary. Its necessity has been emphasized anew by the appointment, and the report, of the recent Famine Commission. Sir Antony MacDonnell and his colleagues were not asked to open questions concerning the prevention of famine. Their business was with the system of relief, and if in their report they have recommended certain measures in anticipation of future famines that part of their work was incidental and was limited by the resolution to which the Commission owed its appointment. More than that, as our readers may remember, the very terms of the resolution appointing Sir Antony MacDonnell's Commission appeared to contemplate a supplementary enquiry. Could that enquiry be conducted upon lines more likely to lead to good results than those which are now marked out by the Indian Famine Union?

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

Another Cabinet Council has been held, and still the country remains unsatisfied. The Ministerialist journals are actually threatening Lord Salisbury with revolt. "What are the Government doing?" asked Mr. Asquith in his speech at Leeds a few nights ago. The question, says a Unionist writer, is one that every paper in the country expects the Prime Minister to deal with in his forthcoming oration at the Guildhall. Lord Salisbury has already made two Guildhall speeches since the beginning of the war. What will he say in his third? Two years ago he filled his supporters with consternation by proclaiming from the Lord Mayor's hospitable board that we were seeking neither gold nor territory in South Africa. Twelve months later a different key was struck, for it is just a year ago this week since the Premier committed himself to the fatal declaration that the Boers must be left without a shred of independence. Perhaps the third speech will revert to the statesmanlike manner of the first. Lord Salisbury, unfortunately, is not his own master. Nominally the driver of the chariot, he is in reality bound to the chariot wheel. To borrow an image of his own he has become what he once said he never would consent to be —a dowager in his own Cabinet.

Some singular fatuity is leading Mr. Asquith to the verge of the morass in which Ministers are now floundering. Every speech that this able man delivers increases the wonder of the public at his new-born enthusiasm for Mr. Chamberlain's war policy. Two years ago when Mr. Morley was warning the country that the outbreak of hostilities must inevitably lead to a policy of annexation, Mr. Asquith scouted the prediction, and declared that annexation would be infamous. Now, of course, he is as much an annexationist as the Colonial Secretary. But he still regards Mr. Morley as a false prophet. The member for Montrose is endeavouring to show his fellow-countrymen that annexation may involve extermination. Mr. Asquith is just as indignant and incredulous over this second warning as he was over the first. Before long we may find him posing once more as a reluctant convert to necessity. The tyrant's plea sounds oddly out of place on the lips of a Liberal.

Imperialism seems fairly to have captivated the imagination of Sir Edward Grey, whose acceptance of the office of President of the Liberal Imperial League has given deep offence to most of Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's colleagues. There can be no doubt that the division between the two sections of the Liberal party is gradually widening. An impression prevails that the Asquithite section are looking forward to the formation of what Mr. Labouchere calls an Addington Government—in other words, a temporary Ministry to finish the war, in which the Liberal Imperialists may join hands with the Unionists, and show the latter how things should be done. Unfortunately, the Liberal Imperialists appear to be as devoid of commonsense as the Tory Imperialists. Their ideal Premier is Lord Rosebery, whose recent gyrations have provoked more amazement than admiration, while their ideal policy would seem to be that of the present Government, plus a more decided tincture of hypocrisy. In pursuance of its aims the Liberal Imperial League is organising a public meeting in London, at which Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Asquith are half-expected to renounce their allegiance to Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman's leadership.

Meanwhile, the war goes doggedly on. Botha, the elusive fugitive of half-a-hundred man hunts, turned on his pursuers a few days ago and relieved them of two guns. This result was not achieved without hard fighting, in which our own cause suffered an irreparable loss by the death of Colonel Benson. Between two and three hundred of our soldiers were killed or wounded, and probably as large a number were disabled on the Boer side. The incident, regrettable in itself, is especially notable for the proof that it affords of the determined temper and efficient organisation of the Boers. Those fierce attacks on the British forces have generally been preceded by some more than usually boastful speech from Lord Milner or Mr. Chamberlain. The Boers, as we have been repeatedly told, are diligent readers of the English newspapers, and there would seem, therefore, to be little doubt that their perusal of the inflamed periods of our self-styled patriots is tending to encourage and aggravate their resistance.

Although darkened by the cloud of the bad news from South Africa, the reception of the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York on their return to London last Saturday was extremely cordial. Both the Duke and Duchess appear to have benefitted in health from their prolonged tour. The former has come back with the complexion of a viking. His son, the young Prince Edward, amused the crowd by the intensity of his surprise at the transformation of the paternal countenance. Never was father so wonderingly scrutinised by his offspring as was the Duke of Cornwall last Saturday during his drive through the populous streets with Prince Edward as his vis-à-vis. There had been some talk on this occasion of a demonstration against Lord Roberts by Sir Redvers Buller's sympathisers, but as the Commander-in-Chief failed to appear in the procession, the intention, if it ever existed, was baffled. Nevertheless, Lord Roberts did not escape scot-free. He was recognised on his way to Pall Mall in a cab, and according to report was hooted at by some of the crowd. Those execrations were aimed at the wrong man. If anyone is to be blamed for General Buller's supersession, apart from that soldier himself, it should be Mr. Brodrick, the responsible Minister.

There are now three versions of the famous Buller heliogram before the public—that of Sir Redvers Buller, which with all its vagueness indicated clearly enough that the message to Ladysmith was intended to be read as conditional and not as positive advice; that of the "National Review" in which the order was represented as an absolute instruction to surrender; and finally that of Dr. Millar Maguire who has just come forward with a "true-sense" version, in which General Buller is shown to have contemplated the possibility of ultimate success, and to have advised Sir George White accordingly. After what has passed, the third version seems almost too flattering to be true. People find it difficult to believe that Mr. Brodrick or Lord Roberts could have withheld so complete a vindication of Buller's conduct from the public. Should the sceptics be mistaken, there will be a heavy reckoning for somebody.

Semi-official statements of a reassuring nature continue to be published with regard to the King's health. His Majesty's recent appearances in public ought to have been enough to silence the sinister rumours of the last few weeks. He is really looking remarkably well, and was never more active than at present. The rumours that have so greatly annoyed the King and disturbed the public mind may be traced to a speech which his Majesty made some months ago to a deputation from the Tuberculosis Congress. On that occasion the King referred to cancer as the most terrible malady to which flesh was heir, whereupon certain quidnuncs at once formed their own conclusions. Subse-

quently, the King contracted a slight cold during his sojourn at Balmoral, and suffered from huskiness for a few days. Hence the rumours, the contradictions, the counter-assertions, and the flat denials.

The marriage of the Chief Liberal Whip with Miss Dorothy Paget, youngest daughter of Sir Richard Paget, attracted a crowded and fashionable congregation to St. Andrew's Church, Wells Street, last Saturday afternoon. Mr. Herbert Gladstone has always been deservedly popular, and the happy occasion showed alike how large is the circle of his friends, and how fond the man in the street is of him. The presents, which were exceptionally numerous and handsome, included a silver inkstand from his Majesty the King. The bride is a cousin of Lady Wedderburn's.

Two topics only have enjoyed the distinction of thick black headlines in the London papers this week—the war and the fog. Londoners are beginning to fear that both may become chronic. Since last Saturday the sky has been invisible save at rare and brief intervals. Each of these visitations of darkness must involve London in a heavy financial loss. Many kinds of employment are suspended altogether, while most of the others can only be carried on intermittently. The perils of the streets, too, are terribly aggravated, life and limb being jeopardised not only by the risks of accident but also by the enterprise of emboldened ruffianism. Under such conditions, life in London becomes invested with many of the amenities of the jungle.

NOTES FROM BOMBAY.

THE NEW AMIR.

CONFIDENCE IN LORD CURZON.

MR. PENNELL'S GRAVE ALLEGATIONS.

WANTED: A COMMISSION OF ENQUIRY.

[From an Indian Correspondent.]

Bombay, October 19.

The death of the Amir of Afghanistan has so far induced none of those complications which have been so prominent in the history of that "god-granted" country. The far-sightedness and shrewd statesmanship of Abdur Rahman have minimised those complications. Habibulla Khan has proclaimed himself Amir with the cordial approval of the Indian Government. His fortune is so far unique, for no Amir in the past century has been known to ascend the throne without fighting for it. From slaughter to the throne—that has been the rule. The late Amir was seated on the *gadi* of his progenitors by the British, and he showed by his statesmanship that he was both a strong and a thoroughly patriotic and independent ruler. It is to be hoped that the young Amir may prove equally strong and independent. He has become the Sovereign of Afghanistan under the most auspicious circumstances, and ought to realise the best expectations. There is little fear of internal turbulence. But the new Amir will have to watch with the utmost vigilance the movement of the Muscovite. The drama will no doubt gradually unfold itself, though at present we see no active symptoms on the side of the Russian.

The Viceroy, meanwhile, is on the alert. For the present he has wisely deemed it his duty to curtail his programme in Burma. He has the satisfaction of knowing that complete confidence is reposed in him by Europeans and Indians alike in his policy with regard to Afghanistan. It has been everywhere said that the presence of a Viceroy of his knowledge and experience of both Afghan and Russian diplomacy is a fortunate circumstance.

The "Gazette of India" has published the Pennell correspondence, but without the defence of that persecuted civilian which it is promised will be given in the form of a Blue-book. Meanwhile, more than one journal has anticipated the Government by giving the defence in instalments, which make very interesting reading indeed. The "Times of India" attempts a survey of the situation, but cannot bring itself to think that the punishment now awarded to Mr. Pennell is undeserved. Discipline in the service must be preserved, and if naught else discipline alone required condign punishment. Still, the "Times of India" thinks that investigation into the merits of the defence might have been fairly made by the Secretary of State. Some journals think Mr. Pennell has been condemned unheard, and that the Secretary of State has found in his leaving India without permission a convenient excuse to extricate himself and his Council from the awkward predicament in which the defence has placed them. In any case, it was essential that the truth of the many startling statements contained in that defence should be fully investigated. Judgment founded upon such investigation would have been more acceptable to the public sense of justice which is greatly interested in the case from a higher and broader point of view. Even if it be granted that Mr. Pennell over-stepped the limits of official decorum and over-rode official discipline, what of his statements regarding the conduct of the highest judicial officers in the land, their secret intrigues and so forth? As one Indian journal puts it: "If these things be true, what do they mean?" For the statements are of an extremely grave character. Mr. Pennell's allegations amount to a grave reflection on the character of the higher judiciary in the country. If even one-tenth of the statements made by him are true, they demand a public enquiry, for they reveal a most undesirable condition of affairs in the administration of justice, tending to shake the confidence of the public and thus weakening the foundations of British rule. For it is scarcely necessary to observe that the strongest element of British administration is British justice and British impartiality. It is on this rock that the rule is held firm. Hence it is the paramount duty of the Secretary of State to see that that foundation is in no wise disturbed. Can it be that all that Mr. Pennell has seriously alleged in black and white against the highest judicial officers is romance and fiction? Are his facts legendary? It would be a serious matter to allow them to pass in silence. The Pennell case by itself is not half so serious as the new off-shoot which he brings forward from that case. In short, is it true that some of our High Court judges are growing subservient to Government and losing their independence? Is it true that mediocrities are preferred to independent ability? In this matter the State itself stands at the bar, and nothing short of a Royal Commission or Parliamentary enquiry can adequately examine the issues. It will be a great mistake for the British Government to allow this matter to pass unnoticed or to wink at it. To wink at it would only create greater suspicion in the public mind which it is the duty of the highest authority to remove. Otherwise, the effect of studied silence would be exceedingly injurious to the reputation of the State in matters judicial. And once Justice is thrown down from her pedestal there is no saying what may happen.

CHRONICLE OF THE WEEK.

Thursday, October 31.—The "Lancet" stated that recent rumours concerning the health of the King were entirely without foundation. His Majesty was in good health and had undergone no operation whatever.

The Ophir, with the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall on board, escorted by the Channel Squadron, arrived in the Solent this afternoon.

Mr. John Morley, addressing a meeting of his constituents at Arbroath, said the war was now drifting and degenerating into one of extermination, and the attitude of the Government was that of sullen desperation. Were the ends which the Government had in view apprehended by our antagonists? Were the Boer leaders unalterably opposed to the essential conditions of our policy? In view of the disastrous effects of the struggle on our finances and our diplomatic position, surely it was worth while, consistently with the maintenance of the ends we had in view, to abstain from sitting with folded hands and saying we would leave it to the soldiers. For a country to say that implied that it was bankrupt in statesmen. He did not believe in such bankruptcy; but if those in office had no further resources, the King would, perhaps, at no distant date, have to seek other advisers with a better insight into facts, and with a more pliant mind in face of the complex and dangerous situation which confronted the country.

Friday, November 1.—General Buller left Aldershot for

his Devonshire home. Crowds assembled to witness his departure, and there was much cheering, especially at the railway station. On his arrival at Exeter there was another demonstration in his honour. In London 800 Devonians assembled at the Hotel Cecil and gave expression to their admiration for the General, who was described as "the saviour of Natal."

The St. Petersburg correspondent of the "Times" stated that it was not denied there that negotiations were again going on in Peking for the settlement of the Manchurian question; but it was asserted that there was nothing in the Russian proposals to which Great Britain or any other Power could reasonably take exception. It was further stated that in diplomatic circles no doubt was entertained as to the sincerity of Russia's desire to withdraw from Manchuria as soon as possible. It was understood that Germany had encouraged Russia to remain, but this was one special reason why she was anxious for evacuation.

SATURDAY, November 2.—The Duke and Duchess of Cornwall landed from the Ophir, and the King and Queen from the Victoria and Albert, and proceeded by special train from Portsmouth to London. They were met by several members of the Royal Family, Ministers, and other distinguished personages. Addresses were presented to the King and the Duke and Duchess by the Agents-General of the colonies and suitably acknowledged. The Royal party then drove in open State carriages, by a route which was profusely decorated throughout and crowded by an enormous assemblage of cheering spectators, to Marlborough House. In the evening the West-end thoroughfares were illuminated.

Telegrams from Paris stated that the Sultan had offered to settle the Lorando and other French claims forthwith if the French squadron were recalled. M. Delcasse was reported to have immediately taken steps to obtain a guarantee for the execution of the promise, and, according to the latest information at the time of writing, the matter rested there for the present. Meanwhile the mystery of Admiral Caillard's mission remained, but it was expected that the presence of the French ships in Turkish waters would be utilised to obtain not merely a settlement of the Lorando claim but of all other similar claims of a personal character, and also a promise from the Porte to observe the rights conferred on France by treaties and capitulations, which the Porte was accused of violating.

The Bishop of Hereford gave an address on patriotism, national and civic, to a congregation of young men at Derby yesterday. In the course of a general reference to the war he maintained that men could be the soundest of all true patriots although they were directly opposed to what the nation was doing.

Mr. Herbert Gladstone, M.P., was married at St. Andrew's, Wells-street, to Miss Dorothy Paget, youngest daughter of Sir Richard Paget.

Lord Kitchener reported a fight between Colonel Benson's column and a strong force of Boers near Brakenlaagte. A Reuter telegram from Pretoria stated that the action was one of the most sanguinary and determined fights of the campaign. Botha attacked Colonel Benson's rearguard while on the march on October 30 with a force estimated at 1,000 strong. Colonel Benson was mortally wounded early in the action, and Major Wools-Sampson, who was acting as intelligence officer, then took command, collected his convoy, and took up a defensive position. The Boers made desperate efforts to overcome the British force, charging repeatedly up to the lines, but were as often driven back with heavy loss. The defence was successfully maintained throughout Thursday and the following night till Colonel Barter arrived on Friday morning. The loss of the Boers was estimated at between 300 and 400.

It was stated that several of the leading Indian Princes had accepted invitations from the King-Emperor to attend his Coronation in London next June. The Viceroy will hold a durbar at Delhi on January 1, 1903, attendance at which will be regarded as equivalent to presence at the Coronation.

Mr. Asquith, speaking at Leeds with regard to the differences in the Liberal party, said that perfect independence on all questions relating to the war must and ought to be regarded as the right of every Liberal, without any imputation of personal or party disloyalty. As to affairs in South Africa, he observed that we did not need the melancholy news of the disaster to Colonel Benson's column to tell us that this war, of which a little more than a year ago the responsible Ministers of the Crown were writing the epitaph, was still alive, and was still the first pre-occupation of British statesmanship. He regarded the conduct of the war as a sorry tale of miscalculation and blunder, which called for the fullest and closest examination, for the freest and most outspoken criticism, and he blamed the Government for their neglect of "some of the most elementary precautions of the commonest prudence." Referring to the terms of peace, Mr. Asquith urged that the Boers should be told without delay that while annexation was irrevocable they might have freedom under the British flag.

MONDAY, November 4.—A supplement to the "London Gazette" contained a proclamation announcing that the full style and titles of the King will in future run:—"Edward VII., by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, and of the British Dominions beyond the Seas, King, Defender of the Faith, Emperor of India."

Sir M. Hicks Beach, addressing his constituents in West Bristol to-night, said he had borrowed an enormous amount of money for the war. He was convinced that the taxpayers paid willingly because of their patriotic feeling. He wished he could say that the war had come to an end and that taxes would be taken off; but he could not, and possibly he might have to ask later for increased taxation.

Mr. Morley, speaking at Forfar to-night, urged that the people of this country ought to resist the mad outcries of the hour and return to those maxims of sanity and caution which had built up our Empire. He declined to rule out the Irish vote from its constitutional position in the Imperial Parliament, and doubted whether the Boers had ever been shown the difference between what they called independence and British Ministers called self-government.

Mr. C. Swinfen Eady, K.C., was appointed a Judge of the Chancery Division in the place of Lord Justice Cozens-Hardy.

Sir W. H. White, Assistant Controller of the Navy and Director of Naval Construction, had, it was understood, decided to resign his post on the ground of failing health.

There was a debate in the French Chamber to-day on Franco-Turkish affairs. The policy of the Government was criticised by M. Sembat, a Socialist, and M. Denys Cochin. M. Delcasse made a statement which was described as of a disappointing character. Ultimately a resolution of confidence in the Ministry was carried by 305 votes to 77.

TUESDAY, November 5.—Lord Kitchener telegraphed that the columns report, since October 28, exclusive of the Brakenlaagte engagement, 58 Boers killed, 11 wounded, 275 prisoners, and 23 surrenders, with the capture of 230 rifles, 21,500 rounds of ammunition, 112 wagons, 150 horses, and 1,430 cattle. He also reported further successful operations against the Boer and rebel bands in Cape Colony. A Reuter telegram from Bloemfontein stated that gradual but satisfactory progress was being made in the pacification and re-organization of the Orange River Colony. Burghers were taking the oath of allegiance in constantly increasing numbers, and the railway line was now almost completely safe.

Lord Rosebery has consented to address a meeting of Chesterfield Liberals, probably at the end of November or in the beginning of December. This was regarded in certain quarters as an indication that he proposed to re-enter active political life.

An important step in the dispute between France and Turkey was accomplished this morning, when Rear-Admiral Caillard's squadron arrived at Mitylene. Various statements were made as to France's intentions, but for the present the coercive measures adopted appeared to be confined to the demonstration off Mitylene and the occupation of ports and the seizure of the Custom-houses of the island.

WEDNESDAY, November 6.—Mr. Chamberlain, speaking at the Imperial Institute on the occasion of a presentation of a sword of honour to General Baden-Powell, pointed out that the great self-governing colonies had perceived from the first the greatness of the issue now being fought out in South Africa—that it was a struggle for our Imperial existence, a struggle for supremacy between two races. Therefore they had made common cause with us, and now that the long struggle was approaching its termination we had no right, even if we had the wish, to make any settlement which would render futile the sacrifices of our kinsfolk.

A Reuter telegram from Peking stated that Li Hung-Chang was fast sinking, and could not live more than a few hours.

It was announced that the proposed conference for the abolition of sugar bounties would be held in Brussels in December or January.

A Constantinople telegram in the "Temps" said, with reference to the Franco-Turkish crisis, that on Tuesday M. Bapst received a letter from Tewfik Pasha stating that the £T340,000 of the Lorando claim would be paid by monthly drafts of £T21,500 on the Customs. No reply had yet been received to M. Bapst's ultimatum of Monday. The "Times" Constantinople correspondent states that the Palace takes the French menaces with great composure, but would probably comply with the last demands.

THURSDAY, November 7.—Li Hung-Chang died at 11 o'clock this morning.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR.

MR. PENNINGTON ON LAND REVENUE ASSESSMENTS.

TO THE EDITOR OF "INDIA."

Sir,—I have read Mr. Pennington's letter which appeared in your issue of November 1. Mr. Pennington has a wide and varied experience in Indian land revenue administration, and has a grasp of land revenue questions such as few Englishmen now in this country can boast of. And he is so sound and even liberal in his general views, that his criticism, even on minor points, deserves my respectful consideration.

The question whether the land tax paid by Madras cultivators is more or less than the rents paid by Bengal cultivators is one which cannot be definitely decided except after a minute and thorough enquiry such as has never been made. All that we know is that the Bengal zemindars prayed to be allowed to take ONE-FOURTH of the produce as rent, and the prayer was not acceded to. (Vide Dampier's evidence before the Famine Commission of 1880.) And subsequently Sir Antony MacDonnell fixed ONE-FIFTH the produce as the maximum of rent in a Government Resolution, which I have quoted in my "Famines in India," p. 107. On the other hand, the Madras Government has fixed ONE-THIRD the produce as the maximum of land tax where land is not irrigated at Government expense. I object to this high maximum. Of course this maximum is not generally levied; but it is an unwise thing in India to fix a high maximum, as it often induces the lower revenue officers to work up towards it. And I am sure Mr. Pennington will feel as much relieved as I shall be if the Government of Madras fixes ONE-FIFTH the produce as its maximum of land tax, as Sir Antony MacDonnell proposed to fix ONE-FIFTH the produce in Bengal as the maximum of rents.

The real question, however, is—not how the Madras land tax compares with Bengal rents—but how far the Madras land tax is consistent with the Government's own declared policy. The Government declared in their Despatch of 1856 that they did not claim the entire economic rent as their land tax; and they declared in their Despatch of 1864 that they desired to have one-half the economic rent as their land tax. Let the Government abide by their own declaration. If it be a fact (and Mr. Pennington admits it in the case of Madras), that both in Madras and in Bombay the present land tax in many cases "sweeps away the whole economic rent of the land"—then this practice is a violation of the declared policy of the Government. And I am sure Mr. Pennington will join me again and again—as he has joined me before now—to set the Government right, and to make their practice consistent with their declared policy.

Mr. Pennington need not feel uneasy because I used the word "neglected" in connexion with the action of the Government with regard to irrigation. The Famine Commissions of 1880, of 1897, and of 1900, have in their Reports used words which in ordinary un-official language mean the same thing. I did not mean, and my hearers did not understand me to say, that the Government had altogether refrained from doing irrigation work. What I did mean, and what my hearers understood me to mean, was (to use Mr. Pennington's own words, for I always rejoice to agree with him), that far more might have been spent on irrigation, and far less on railways, WITH ADVANTAGE TO THE COUNTRY.—Yours faithfully, ROMESH DUTT.

November 4.

THE PREVENTION OF FAMINE.

IMPORTANT MEMORIAL FROM THE INDIAN FAMINE UNION.

PRAYER FOR DETAILED ECONOMIC ENQUIRY IN TYPICAL VILLAGES.

TO THE EDITOR OF "INDIA."

Sir,—By direction of the INDIAN FAMINE UNION we forward herewith copy of a Memorial which will shortly be presented to the Secretary of State for India; and shall esteem it a favour if you will give it space in your columns.

The British public, by liberal contributions to famine funds, have shown their sympathy for Indian suffering; and they appreciate the energy and success with which the Government of India has striven to relieve the famine-stricken. But many feel that, as trustees for India, a heavy responsibility rests upon them to seek out the causes of these recurring calamities, and to co-operate with the administration in promoting means of prevention. With these objects in view the INDIAN FAMINE UNION has been formed; and this Memorial has been prepared, praying for a detailed enquiry into the economic condition of typical villages in the famine area. You will see that the signatories represent important classes throughout the country; and we trust you will support the prayer of the Memorial, and give to a wider public the opportunity of joining in a movement which is strictly non-party, and which seeks in a humble way to fulfil our national duty towards the Indian people.

We are, etc.,
W. WEDDERBURN,
S. S. THORBURN,
M. M. BHOWNAGGREE,
Joint Hon. Secretaries.

INDIAN FAMINE UNION,
Palace Chambers, Westminster, S.W.
1st November, 1901.

To the Right Hon. LORD G. HAMILTON, M.P.,
H. M. Principal Secretary of State for India,
Whitehall, S.W.

My Lord,—We, the undersigned, being interested in the welfare of India, and grieved on account of the sufferings of the Indian people from recurring famines, desire to approach you with reference to an investigation of the causes of these famines and the promotion of all practical means of prevention.

We recognise the energy and success with which the Government of India have through several visitations of famine performed their stupendous task of feeding millions of starving sufferers scattered over vast areas, and we believe that the various Famine Commissions, by careful scrutiny of past results, are gradually bringing our system of famine relief to the highest point of efficiency. The methods of famine relief do not therefore appear to us to press for enquiry. But there remains the question of famine prevention. Here all possible help is needed to collect facts and mature practical suggestions. And we believe that such help as we can offer will be welcomed by the hard-worked officials in India, whose time is fully occupied by the current duties of administration.

Many means have been suggested for strengthening the position of the Indian agriculturist and rendering him more capable of resisting the effects of drought, such as the more rapid extension of irrigation, agricultural banks, village and other industries, re-afforestation, migration, grain storage, export duties on grain, technical education, arbitration courts, besides administrative reforms, such as timely remissions of land revenue during periods of famine, and the limitation of land alienation. These various remedies appear to us to deserve careful enquiry, and we doubt not that, as each comes under investigation, your Lordship will favour us with information from the India Office showing what has been done by the Government in the directions indicated up to the present time. But we are most strongly impressed with the conviction that the problem of checking famine in India cannot usefully be considered without further special knowledge of the different circumstances of its extended territories and of their inhabitants. What is beneficial in one area may be useless and even mischievous elsewhere. An exact diagnosis of the patient must precede the application of remedies. Our request therefore is that the Government will be pleased to cause a detailed enquiry to be made into the economic condition of a limited number of selected villages in each of the provinces which have been afflicted by famine. It is suggested that in each province the local administration should select typical villages, and appoint suitable persons, including officials and non-officials, Europeans and Indians, to make a complete enquiry into their condition,

ascertaining the exact financial position of each cultivator, with the history and causes of his difficulties. When the economic record of these villages is complete, approved experiments in their management might be entrusted to administrators of proved capacity and discretion. Different groups of villages will doubtless be found to require different treatment; and the remedies, administrative and legislative, found efficacious in the typical villages could be afterwards cautiously extended to the groups existing under similar economic conditions.

We ask with the more confidence for the detailed local enquiries above indicated because we find that precedents exist in which the Government of India have based remedial agrarian legislation upon the results of such enquiries. As important instances we would refer to the labours of the Dekkhan Riots Commission, which led to the Dekkhan Ryots Relief Act of 1879; and to the Punjab Alienation of Land Act, 1900, which was based upon a village and holding-by-holding enquiry carried out in 1895-6 by Mr. Thorburn in typical tracts in the Western Punjab. This enquiry, which was both minute and comprehensive, extending to 742 villages, was completed within six months, and involved an extra expense of only £300.

We are, of course, aware that valuable information regarding the economic condition of the agriculturists has been collected by the Government from time to time, especially by means of the enquiries initiated in 1881 and in 1887, and we hope for much enlightenment from a study of the information thus made accessible. But we desire to point out that, although this information is most valuable for purposes of comparison, it is based on enquiries having no direct connexion with famine questions; it belongs to a period before the great famines of 1897 and 1900 had seriously affected the condition of so large a portion of the agricultural population; and it was not generally based, as we believe, on such local enquiries as we suggest. It appears to us, therefore, that fresh enquiries of the kind asked for are urgently necessary, in order to determine the economic condition of the cultivators with reference to their present power of resisting the attacks of famine.

In conclusion, we desire to state that this movement is of a purely scientific character, that it is unconnected with party politics, and that our wish is to support the Indian Government in its efforts to deal with a great national calamity.

For the INDIAN FAMINE UNION,
LEONARD H. COURTNEY,
Chairman.
W. WEDDERBURN,
S. S. THORBURN,
M. M. BHOWNAGGREE,
Joint Hon. Secretaries.

The Hon. Secretaries have been authorised to add the following names to this Memorial:—

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster, the Archbishop of Armagh, the Bishop of Carlisle, the Bishop of Liverpool, the Marquis of Ripon, the Earl of Aberdeen, the Earl of Dunmore, the Lord Hobhouse, the Lord Kinnaird, the Lord Leigh, the Lord Radstock, the Lord Stanley of Alderley, Sir Auckland Colvin, K.C.S.I., Right Hon. Sir Richard Garth, K.C., Sir Lepel Griffin, K.C.S.I., Sir John Jardine, K.C.I.E., Sir William Markby, K.C.I.E., Sir William Muir, K.C.S.I., General Sir Henry Norman, G.C.B., Sir W. Comer Petheram, Sir John Budd Phear, K.C.I.E, General Sir J. W. Schneider, Sir Raymond West, K.C.I.E., Mr. G. B. Chapman, Mr. T. Hart Davies, Mr. T. A. Denny, Mr. E. C. Ozanne, Dr. A. D. Pollen, Mr. J. R. Reid, C.I.E., Mr. H. J. Reynolds, C.S.I., Mr. Alex. Rogers, Mr. G. W. Vidal, Mr. C. W. Whish, Mr. T. Gair Ashton, M.P., Mr. T. Burt, M.P., Mr. John Burns, M.P., Mr. T. Bayley, M.P., Mr. J. Brigg, M.P., Mr. W. S. Caine, M.P., Mr. D. Brynmor Jones, M.P., Mr. J. Herbert Lewis, M.P., Sir John Leng, M.P., Mr. J. Herbert Roberts, M.P., Mr. Thomas Shaw, K.C., M.P., Mr. H. J. Wilson, M.P., Mr. J. H. Yoxall, M.P., the Dean of Durham, the Dean of Lincoln, the Dean of Llandaff, the Dean of Manchester, the Principal of Jesus College, Oxford, the Warden of Keble College, Oxford, the Principal of Manchester College, Oxford, the Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford, the Master of Pembroke College, Oxford, the Principal of Somerville College, Oxford, the Master of Catherine College, Cambridge, the Master of Clare College, Cambridge, the President of Queen's College, Cambridge, the Principal of Aberdeen University, the President of Queen's College, Belfast, Rev. Canon Ainger, Rev. R. A. Armstrong, Rev. W. T. A. Barber, Rev. Canon Barnett, Mr. Bramwell Booth, Rev. Dr. John Clifford, Rev. E. D. Cornish, Rev. J. Estlin Carpenter, Rev. Dr. Glasse, Rev. Canon Gore, Rev. Canon Hicks, Rev. J. Page Hopps, Rev. A. O. M. Jay, Rev. Canon Knox-Little, Rev. J. T. McGaw, Rev. Dr. Mair, Rev. Dr. Marshall, Rev. F. B. Meyer, Rev. J. H. Moulton, Rev. Dr. Paterson, Rev. J. E. Radcliffe, Rev. Dr. Rigg, Rev. T. G. Selby, Archdeacon Sinclair, Rev. T. Spurgeon, Rev. Dr. Taylor, Rev. H. A. Thomas, Rev. S. Vincent, Rev. H. Russell Wakefield, Rev. Principal Whitehouse, Ven. Archdeacon Wilson, Sir Arthur Arnold, Sir Thomas Barlow, M.D., Dr. Karl Blind, Mr. P. W. Bunting, Mr. Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, General Sir William Butler, Mr. W. P. Byles, Mr. Jas. Carter, Mr. Donald Crawford, Mr. Wm. Digby, C.I.E., Mr. J. Passmore Edwards, Mr. A. E. Fletcher, Sir Douglas Fox, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Fry, Sir Theodore Fry, Professor Wm. Graham, Mr. Frederic Harrison, Mr. T. E. Higham, Mr. C.H. Hopwood, K.C., Mr. J. Seymour Keay, Mr. Bertram Knightley, Mr. C. S. Loch, Right Hon. Sir Massey Lopes, Mr. Fred. Maddison, Professor Alfred Marshall, Mr. George Meredith, Mr. H. S. Murray, Professor S. J. Owen, Mr. H. D. Pearsall, Sir H. Gilzean-Reid, Mr. G. Bernard Shaw, Mr. J. Bamford Slack, Mr. Robinson Souttar, Mr. Herbert Spencer, Sir W. P. Treloar, Sir E. H. Verney, Mr. Alfred Wallace, Professor John Westlake, Mr. A. J. Wilson, Mrs. G. S. Barnett, Miss E. A. Bayly ("Edna Lyall"), Mrs. Bramwell Booth, Mrs. W. P. Byles, the Countess of Carlisle, Miss Alison Garland, Madame Sarah Grand, Mrs. Eva M'Laren, Mrs. Chas. Mallet, Mrs. F. Max Muller, Mrs. Russell Rea, Mrs. Flora Annie Steel, the Countess of Warwick, the Lord Mayor of Bristol, the Lord Mayor of York, the Mayor of Barnsley, the Mayor of Barrow-in-Furness, the Mayor of Birkenhead, the Mayor of Blackburn, the Mayor of Bootle, the Mayor of Bradford, the Mayor of Cheltenham, the Mayor of Coventry, the Mayor of Gateshead, the Mayor of Grimsby, the Mayor of Huddersfield, the Mayor of Ipswich, the Mayor of Maidstone, the Mayor of Newport (Mon.), the Mayor of Nottingham, the Mayor of Shoreditch, the Mayor of Stepney, the Mayor of Sunderland, the Mayor of Warrington, the Mayor of Wigan, the Provost of Ayr, the Provost of Melrose, the Provost of Montrose, the Provost of Paisley, the Chairman, Blackburn Chamber of Commerce, the Chairman, Cardiff Chamber of Commerce, the Lord Aberdare, the Lord Keane, the Marquis of Winchester, the Lord Wrottesley, Sir George Birdwood, K.C.I.E., General Sir Andrew Clarke, Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E., Mr. Robert H. Elliot, Colonel H. B. Hanna, Sir Robert G. Head, Mr. J. Knox Wight, Mr. Edward Bond, M.P., Mr. R. Cameron, M.P., Mr. Alfred Emmott, M.P., Mr. Samuel Evans, K.C., M.P., Sir Michael Foster, M.P., Sir Walter Foster, M.P., Mr. J. P. Farrell, M.P., Mr. M. J. Flavin, M.P., Sir W. Brampton Gurdon, M.P., Mr. J. Keir Hardie, M.P., Mr. A. H. Heath, M.P., Mr. J. D. Hope, M.P., Mr. P. J. Kennedy, M.P., Sir James Kitson, M.P., Colonel Hon. Heneage Legge, M.P., Mr. Maurice Levy, M.P., Mr. Chas. McArthur, M.P., Dr. T. J. Macnamara, M.P., Mr. J. Lloyd Morgan, M.P., Mr. Chas. Morley, M.P., Mr. T. W. Nussey, M.P., Mr. J. J. O'Shee, M.P., Mr. A. C. Humphreys Owen, M.P., Mr. D. V. Pirie, M.P., Mr. H. J. Rickett, M.P., Mr. S. Forde Ridley, M.P., Mr. Edmund Robertson, K.C., M.P., Mr. C. P. Scott, M.P., Mr. Charles E. Shaw, M.P., Mr. J. W. Spear, M.P., Mr. T. Courtenay Warner, M.P., Mr. J. K. Wingfield-Digby, M.P., Mr. Samuel Young, M.P., the Dean of Gloucester, Rev. Dr. G. S. Barrett, Rev. Canon McColl, Rev. Wm. Dale, Rev. Hugh Price Hughes, Rev. Vernon Staley, Rev. Chas. Voysey, Comptoir National d'Escompte (Mr. E. Lazarus, Manager), Councillor Fielding Johnson, Sir Wm. Bruce, Sir Alfred Newton, Mr. A. G. Symonds, Mr. Edgar Speyer (Messrs. Speyer Bros.), Dr. R. Spence Watson, Mr. Alexander Wedderburn, K.C., Mr. Spencer Wilkinson, Mr. W. Martin Wood, Mrs. H. Bradlaugh Bonner, Chairman, Cambridgeshire County Council, Chairman, Merionethshire County Council, the Mayor of Gloucester, the Chairman, Bradford Chamber of Commerce.

OPINIONS OF THE BRITISH PRESS.

THE "MANCHESTER GUARDIAN."

We publish to-day an important memorial addressed by the Indian Famine Union to Lord George Hamilton. The Union is a society formed last June on non-political lines with the object of investigating the economic causes of famine in India and of promoting possible methods of prevention. It has now come forward with a definite proposal—backed by the signatures of many well-known Englishmen headed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Vaughan, and Mr. Leonard Courtney, and a number of distinguished Anglo-Indian officials like Sir Auckland Colvin and Sir Lepel Griffin—for a detailed enquiry into the economic condition of a number of selected villages in the famine areas. The memorial declares that the problem of famine prevention cannot be properly discussed without a fuller knowledge of the varying circumstances of the Natives in the several provinces. India is a vast country inhabited by many different peoples, and it is admitted that the same methods of combating famine cannot be applied with equal success in every district. But, for want of exact information as to the condition of the various classes and grades among the peasantry, as to their manner of life and degree of indebtedness, the general principles formulated by the Indian Government have not always been modified sufficiently to meet local needs. The Government has been too much inclined to propound universal remedies without fully understanding the particular diseases from which the various districts were suffering. It is now asked to examine into India's economic ailments more thoroughly, to take a village or two in each province or part of a province and enquire minutely into the affairs of the villagers, and then, if it can, to deduce from the facts thus brought together some means of keeping famine away

from their doors. The Indian Famine Union makes a modest request which Lord George Hamilton should find it easy to grant.

The enquiry would do something to dispel the terrible doubt which arises out of a consideration of the famine question. We are all justly proud of the British administration of India. The Indian Civil Service is without doubt the most self-denying, conscientious, and efficient body of public servants that ever ruled a foreign dependency, and has earned the admiration of the world. Three hundred millions of people of all races and religions live at peace under its rule, and the official statements year by year testify, upon the whole, to a steady growth of material prosperity. Nevertheless, whenever the monsoon fails millions of people are left face to face with starvation, not because India does not produce sufficient corn for her own consumption or because it is difficult to transport grain from the districts where there is a superabundance to those where the crops have withered, but simply and solely because the threatened peasantry have no money with which to buy food. The mortality in time of famine is often attributed simply to the drought, as if the afflicted areas were cut off from the rest of the world and forced to depend on their own inadequate crops. Yet in the Ahmedabad district at the height of the last famine, when people were dying in thousands, the traders were reported to have a stock of grain sufficient for two years' consumption. Facts like this prove that natural causes against which it is admittedly difficult to make provision —the Indian Government cannot control the rainfall nor supply artificial irrigation in every district—do not fully account for the suffering caused by famines in India. Economic causes also must be at work—deep-seated causes which prevent the cultivator from saving enough in the good years to tide over the bad years, and which are plunging him deeper and deeper into the mire of debt and despair. We are forced to ask ourselves whether these economic evils may not be traced, directly or indirectly, to that famous system of government which has been slowly built up by the labours of many great Englishmen, and whether, while anxious to do our best for India, to give her a thoroughly good and just administration, we are not unconsciously undermining the foundations of Indian society, which rests upon the peasant-cultivator in his village community. All the wise measures for extending irrigation, for encouraging manufacturing industries, for establishing agricultural banks, and the like, which have been proposed or adopted will not resolve our doubts as to the economic soundness of our rule in India. The whole system of land tenure and of taxation is called in question by the repeated famines, each worse than the one before it, which we have witnessed of late years.

The Report of the last Famine Commission has thrown some light on the question. It has proved that the methods of the Provincial Governments vary greatly, and that while in the Central Provinces, for example, the sufferings of the people were lightened by generous remissions of taxes, the Bombay Government did not think fit to abate its demands to the same extent, with very disastrous results for the famine-stricken cultivators. No doubt the strong remarks made by the Commission will induce the Bombay Government to show more liberality another time, but there must be something wrong with a system under which taxes are wrung from almost destitute peasants who have many months of semi-starvation before them. No one supposes that the Bombay officials are less tender-hearted than those of the other presidencies, but their principles of administration are faulty, no doubt because they are based on an imperfect appreciation of the facts. Such an enquiry as the Indian Famine Union asks the Secretary for India to institute would bring out these facts for the benefit of Indian officials as well as the English public. It would show how the Indian peasant lives, what his income is in a normal year, what proportion of it he pays to the State, how much he may reasonably be expected to put by, how much he owes to the village money-lender—just those facts about which anyone may theorise but of which so little is definitely known. Mr. Charles Booth, in his "Life and Labour of the People," has shown how a house-to-house enquiry in a single city may reveal economic facts of the highest importance that had been only dimly guessed at before. The detailed enquiry which is now asked for in selected Indian villages in the various tracts that are most exposed to famine would, we are sure, produce a mass of first-hand evidence that would materially assist an understanding of the economic problems of India and point the way towards their solution. We trust that Lord George Hamilton will accept the proposal in the spirit in which it is offered—as a sign of the profound interest which Englishmen of all parties take in the well-being of our great dependency.—(November 2.)

THE "MORNING LEADER."

We print in another column a letter which we have received from the Secretaries of the Indian Famine Union accompanying a copy of an extremely important memorial, which is shortly to be presented to Lord George Hamilton. The Famine Union, as many of our readers will remember, was formed some months ago in London with the primary object of helping to investigate the causes, and so to prevent the recurrence, of famine in India. The publication of the present memorial marks, we take it, the completion of the first stage of the work of the Union. The prayer of the memorial is for the institution, which it is hard to see how the India Office can refuse, of detailed enquiry into the economic condition of a limited number of selected villages in each of the Indian provinces that have been afflicted by famine. Nobody, least of all the members of the Famine Union, of which Mr. Leonard Courtney is the distinguished chairman, doubts or depreciates the energy and devotion shown by the Government of India in the stupendous work of famine relief. Nor is it denied that the code or system under which relief is administered has, by the labours of successive Famine Commissions, been brought to a level of generally creditable efficiency. But the deeper problem of prevention remains. An old proverb says that prevention is better than cure. It is incalculably better than palliation. We believe, therefore, that our readers and the public generally will cordially support this proposal for economic enquiry, which must necessarily precede well-considered schemes of prevention. Needless to say, there is no question of political partisanship involved. The officials of the Famine Union, who have promoted the memorial, include men so different as Sir William Wedderburn, Mr. S. S. Thorburn, and Sir M. M. Bhownaggree, while among the first list of signatories of the memorial we find the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Ripon, Lord Aberdeen, Lord Hobhouse, Sir Auckland Colvin, Sir Richard Garth, Sir William Markby, Sir William Muir, Sir Henry Norman, Mr. Burt, Mr. John Burns, the Dean of Durham, Canon Ainger, Dr. Clifford, Canon Gore, Canon Knox-Little, General Butler, Mr. Frederic Harrison, Mr. George Meredith, and Mr. Herbert Spencer. These are but a few names from many. Rarely have we seen a list of signatories at once so influential and so thoroughly representative of diverse sections of the community.

We hope, as we believe, that the representative and non-partisan character of the memorial will be further emphasised by the addition of a large number of names from men and women of all classes, all parties, and all creeds. The liberality with which the British public have always contributed to the relief funds proves, as Sir William Wedderburn and his colleagues observe, their sympathy for Indian suffering. But as trustees for India we cannot be content to deal only with the symptoms of a mortal disease. We must also show our readiness to co-operate with the Government, and with others, in the work of discovering and eradicating the causes. There is, indeed, no lack of suggestions for, or at least in the direction of, the prevention of famine. We hear, as we ought to hear, much of irrigation, agricultural banks, village and other industries, re-afforestation, grain storage, technical instruction, and a diminution of the economic drain from India. But none of these remedies, however important, is in itself a panacea, and general assent will probably be given to the statement of the memorialists that "the problem of checking famine in India cannot be usefully considered without further special knowledge of the different circumstances of its extended territories and of their inhabitants." What is useful in one district may be mischievous in another. Accordingly, the Famine Union proposes a microscopic investigation of certain typical phenomena, conducted much upon the plan which was adopted by Mr. Charles Booth in London, and intended to yield a fresh series of "Family Budgets." It is suggested, the memorialists say, that in each province the local administration should select typical villages, and appoint suitable persons, including officials and non-officials, Europeans and Indians, to make a complete enquiry into their condition, ascertaining the exact financial position of each cultivator, with the history and causes of his difficulties.

The knowledge so obtained will afford a starting-point for experiment, and successful experiment will naturally be followed by changes of a more permanent kind. The proposal seems thoroughly reasonable, modest, and scientific. The danger is lest, for that very reason, it should incur the hostility of Lord George Hamilton and his advisers. But even so we predict with some confidence that he can find no plausible reason for refusing the enquiry. For (1) it is strictly in accordance with Indian precedent. Enquiries of a similar, though not of the same, kind preceded and produced the Deccan Rayats Relief Act of 1879 and the Punjab Land Alienation Act of last year. Then (2) no great expenditure is required. Mr. Thorburn's elaborate enquiry in the Western Punjab, upon which the last-named Act was based, involved an extra expense of only £300. Nor (3) need any considerable number of officials be taken from their present duties. Most of the work might well be done by retired officers of special competence. And finally (4) it cannot be said that the enquiry is superfluous. Enquiries into the economic condition of certain Indian agriculturists there have doubtless been—as, for example, in 1881 and in 1887. But what is wanted is an "ad hoc" enquiry, dealing with the existing facts, approaching them for a special purpose, and ascertaining them by means of local investigation. The burden of proof undoubtedly rests upon those who, at a time when famine in India is growing both more frequent and more intense, would check or thwart the philanthropic efforts of able and disinterested men. Meantime, the immediate duty of the public and the Press is, we think, to support the memorial by every means in their power.—(November 2.)

THE "DAILY NEWS."

We sincerely hope that Lord George Hamilton will lend a sympathetic ear to the memorial which is to be presented to him by the Indian Famine Union. Its representations are of an entirely moderate and non-controversial character. There is nothing in them to wound the feelings of the India Office or the Indian Civil Service—no aspersions on systems or individuals, and no suggestion of partisan aims. The memorial is signed by leading men of both parties, including fifty M.P.'s, and by such representative people as the leaders of the Free Churches, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Cardinal Vaughan, Mr. George Meredith, Mr. Herbert Spencer, Sir Edward Fry, Lord Aberdeen, Professor Marshall, and General Sir William Butler. It is also signed by the Marquis of Ripon, a Viceroy whose name will be held in everlasting remembrance by the Indian people, and by a brilliant and famous group of Indian ex-officials. The petition will, in fact, come before the Secretary for India with a remarkable backing, both from men who knew and have served India and from those who wish India well and would serve it if they could. It is already signed by several Mayors and Chairmen of County Councils; we shall hope to see every Borough and County

in the United Kingdom represented before the list of names is closed. India has a genuine and touching faith in the good will of the English people, a faith which has persisted through much discouragement, and it would be a happy thing if the Famine Union's memorial could take on such a national character as to show our fellow-subjects that their confidence is not misplaced. Never since British rule began has India been subjected to such a time of fiery trial as during the famine years which have seen the old century out and the new one in, and a national declaration of practical sympathy just now would assuredly count for something.

The object of the memorialists is certainly not heroic. They simply ask that an enquiry shall be undertaken by the Indian Government, with the assistance of outsiders, into the economic condition of typical villages in the famine area, the idea being to obtain an accurate picture of the state of the people as an aid to the preparation of preventive measures. "When the economic record of these villages is complete, approved experiments in their management might be entrusted to administrators of proved capacity and discretion. Different groups of villages will, doubtless, be found to require different treatment, and the remedies, administrative and legislative, found efficacious in the typical villages could be afterwards cautiously extended to the groups existing under similar economic conditions." The Indian village as Sir William Wedderburn is never tired of pointing out, is a mirror which reflects with wonderful completeness the economy of Indian life; and if these groups of villages are subjected to a thorough stock-taking, and the details of income, indebtedness, and land alienation, the incidence of rent and land tax, and the effects of our system of Civil Courts can be brought out, we shall know something more than we do at present about the suitability of our governing system and the staying power of the peasantry. We know enough already to have our misgivings and to realise the urgent necessity of overhauling British administration as one of the possible famine factors in British India; but by all means let us have the village histories and get to the truth of the question. Mr. Thorburn's enquiry into the villages of the Punjab led to the passing of the Land Alienation Bill last year, and we do not doubt that something practical will come of the present proposal if Lord George Hamilton will allow it to proceed. Famine must be attacked from many points, and this enquiry, so far as we can see, will serve to supplement, without in any way delaying, the schemes which Lord Curzon is pushing forward for increasing irrigation, for checking the flow of alienated holdings, and for establishing agricultural banks. It will also serve, if we are not mistaken, to impress on the public mind the circumstance that poverty and famine are, for great masses of the people of India, interchangeable terms, and to compel an answer to the question whether the work of social reconstruction conducted in conformity with Asiatic ideas and with the co-operation of the people and their village communities must not be the first line of defence against famine.—(November 4.)

THE "DAILY GRAPHIC."

A committee of ladies and gentlemen who are interested in India have presented a very temperate appeal to the Secretary of State for a systematic enquiry into the causes of Indian famines. In their memorandum the committee point out that all sorts of schemes have been suggested for rendering the people of India less liable to the terrible disaster of famine, and that it is most important that these schemes should be winnowed out, and the chaff separated from the solid grain. That is a reasonable demand, and the gratification of it is made easier for the Indian Government by the explanation that the probable value of these various schemes should be estimated by means of a careful enquiry into the economic condition of a limited number of selected villages in each famine district. It is beyond question that while the wealth of India, as a whole, is increasing, there are vast areas where a semi-starving peasantry know nothing of the growing prosperity in more fortunate regions. A Government enquiry into the circumstances of these suffering districts is not likely to result in any immediate improvement of their condition, but at least it will help to show what measures of reform are feasible. It is hardly possible to hope that the risk of famine will be altogether removed from India for many years to come, but at least we can take steps to ascertain the best means for rendering famine less frequent, and for mitigating its severity.—(November 2.)

THE "GLOBE."

The memorial about to be presented to Lord George Hamilton, in connexion with Indian famines, chiefly deserves consideration on account of the highly influential and representative character of the attached signatures. Apart from that, we cannot discover any particular value, of a practical kind, in the various suggestions. The memorialists themselves bear testimony to the admirable manner in which the Indian Government copes with these terrible visitations, and we question whether Lord Curzon and his colleagues have anything to learn on that subject from advisers few or none of whom have taken personal part in operating the relieving machinery. The chief proposal is to cause detailed enquiry into the economic condition of a few selected villages in each province included in the famine area. After the completion of this preliminary investigation, "suitable persons" would be appointed to ascertain on the spot the exact financial position of each cultivator, with the history and cause of his difficulties. It needs no showing that this prolonged process would involve considerable expenditure by the State. But that would be of little moment if the facts desired were inaccessible by other means. The question that arises is whether the provincial governors and their subordinates are not already in possession of all essential information. Their reports certainly seem to demonstrate a very comprehensive knowledge of the economic condition of the peasantry for whose well-being they are responsible. We see no reason, therefore, for calling into existence additional enquiring bodies to which no such responsibility could attach. The outcome would almost inevitably be conflicting counsels in many cases, and the Viceroy would find his embarrassments increased rather than diminished.—(Oct. 31.)

THE "ECHO."

We publish to-day a résumé of a most important letter from the chairman and secretaries of the Indian Famine Union to the Secretary of State for India. We greatly regret the indifference and apathy with which the people of this country view the sufferings of our myriad subjects in that portion of the Empire. It is partly ignorance and partly the indifference bred by a feeling of helplessness at the magnitude of the evil. Both Mr. Leonard Courtney and Sir William Wedderburn believe, and we share their belief, that much might be done by an investigation into the causes of these famines, to obviate the fearful suffering that has afflicted millions of starving villagers. Undoubtedly the extension of irrigation works and the limitation of land alienation are two most important means for effecting the desired object, but there is abundant scope in all directions for searching enquiry. In the opinion of experts it is not unlikely that the results of the investigation would be for the lasting welfare of this great country. We should like to point out that a very large number of distinguished men of all parties and of all creeds have signed this Open Letter, and we trust that it will move the Government to take immediate steps in the direction indicated.—(November 1.)

"SUFFOLK CHRONICLE AND MERCURY."

The London correspondent wrote (November 1):—A very remarkable movement has been started in London, having the object of getting the Government to start a detailed enquiry into the causes of the repeated famines which desolate India. The suggestion is that in each province the local administration should select typical villages, and appoint suitable persons, both official and non-official, Europeans and Indians, and then a complete enquiry should be made into the financial position of each cultivator, with the history and causes of his difficulties. It is also suggested that approved experiments in the management of villages should be entrusted to administrators of proved capacity and discretion. All these suggestions are being brought before the notice of Lord George Hamilton in a memorial signed by distinguished people of all parties and of no party. The list begins with the Archbishop of Canterbury and Cardinal Vaughan; it includes the names of a large number of members of both Houses of Parliament, great soldiers, able administrators, Bishops, Deans, the leading men in Oxford and Cambridge, as well as some of the leading women in the land. I notice that the Mayors of twenty towns have signed, and in the list is the signature of the Mayor of Ipswich. I believe Lord George Hamilton is anxious to do what he is fond of doing—that is, nothing. But it strikes me he can scarcely ignore a memorial supported by such signatures, nor can he pretend that the movement is inspired by party politics.

THE "DAILY CHRONICLE."

We publish to-day a highly-interesting memorial from the Indian Famine Union, which has been signed by many influential names, and is about to be presented to the Secretary of State for India. The Indian Famine Union appears to be much the same body as the Indian Congress re-organised on a more practical basis, and with a single definite object in view. With the cause of the people of India we have always had the sincerest sympathy; but it has not always appeared to us in the past that the methods of the Indian Congress have been such as to enlist the goodwill of the British public, through which alone the interests of India can be furthered. But the present memorial from the Indian Famine Union is characterised by sobriety of language and soundness of reasoning. It is, in fact, a sober non-partisan statement of an admittedly great evil, and it contains a sound economic suggestion, based upon successful precedent, which would be an advance upon any measures which the Government of India have yet taken in hand to cope with the giant spectre of Famine. The suggestion is that a detailed enquiry be made into the economic condition of a limited number of selected villages in each of the provinces which have been afflicted by famine, and that for each separate province its special remedy be appointed. This idea alone shows an appreciation of the conditions which prevail in India, where province differs from province in climate and other characteristics as much as one country differs from another on the continent of Europe. One province may be irrigated from rivers, another from tanks, and another perhaps not at all. It is possible that every province may not have its remedy for famine, but there is one thing certain, that every province has not the same remedy. It is this elementary fact that has always put doctrinaire theories out of court, and that gives this present suggestion its special value. It is an extension of the idea of a Famine Commission on more detailed and minute lines. We are aware that Lord Curzon has already in hand a Commission to enquire into the possibility of further irrigation in India, which would be one of the points covered by the suggested enquiry, but only one out of a number. One of the precedents for such a course of action is the village enquiry carried out by Mr. Thorburn, one of the secretaries of the Indian Famine Union, into the state of indebtedness of the peasant in the Punjab. That enquiry resulted in the Punjab Alienation of Land Act, one of Lord Curzon's most daring speculations in social legislation, which is still under trial. As this particular Act only came into operation last year, it is impossible yet to say what its results may be; but in the present practical suggestion for the whole of India we trace the same reforming brain that inspired Lord Curzon's experiment in the Punjab. We hope that the Viceroy may display the same open-minded energy in adopting this latter idea also.—(October 30.)

PUBLICATIONS RELATING TO INDIA.

To be obtained from
THE BRITISH COMMITTEE OF THE INDIAN NATIONAL CONGRESS,
84-85, PALACE CHAMBERS, WESTMINSTER, S.W.

Reports of the Proceedings at the Annual Sessions of the Indian National Congress, from the 3rd to the 14th Session. 2s. each, post free.

The Skeleton at the (Jubilee) Feast (Congress Green Book I.), by Sir WILLIAM WEDDERBURN, Bart. (being a series of suggestions for the prevention of famine in India). Post free, 7d.

Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure: Evidence-in-Chief of the Indian Witnesses. (Congress Green Book II.) Post free, 1s. 10d.

The Proposed Separation of Judicial and Executive Functions in India. Memorial to the Secretary of State. With two Appendices. (Congress Green Book III.) Post free, 1s. 2d.

Two Statements presented to the Indian Currency Committee (1898), by Mr. DADABHAI NAOROJI.

Speech by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, M.P., in the House of Commons, August 14, 1894, on the Debate on the Indian Budget.
Ditto do. in the House of Commons, February 12, 1895, on the Debate on the Address.
Ditto do. on British Rule in India (1898).

Presidential Address by Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, M.P., delivered to the Indian National Congress at Lahore, 1893.

Presidential Address by Mr. A. M. Bose, M.A., delivered to the Indian National Congress at Madras, 1898.

Speeches of Mr. Alfred Webb, M.P., President of the Indian National Congress, 1894-5.

Valedictory Address of Mr. Alfred Webb, M.P., delivered at Bombay, January 17, 1895.

Speeches of Mr. D. E. Wacha delivered at the 9th, 11th and 14th Sessions of the Indian National Congress.

Is the Government of India Responsible to Anyone, and if so to Whom? Speech delivered at Croydon by Mr. W. C. BONNERJEE.

The Famine in India. Speeches delivered at a Public Reception to Mr. Vaughan Nash on his return from the Famine Districts, July, 1900.

Mr. A. O. Hume's Farewell to India. Speech delivered at Bombay, 1894.

India Reform Pamphlet IX. The State and Government of India under its Native Rulers. 3d.

The Indian National Congress: its Aims and Justification. By ROBERT KNIGHT.

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